

The independent nonprofit that saves, preserves, and shares New Hampshire history.

NEWS FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE

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HOW DO YOU DEFINE NEW HAMPSHIRE?

EXHIBITION SHOWCASES ICONS OF THE STATE'S HISTORY

CONCORD, NH. What comes to mind when you think of New Hampshire? What best symbolizes the state and its people? The New Hampshire Historical Society offers up more than 100 possible answers in the exhibition *Icons of History: Objects that Define New Hampshire*. The exhibition's Part I opened in May at the Society's museum, at 6 Eagle Square in Concord, and will be on view through the end of the year. The exhibition's Part II is now open at the Society's headquarters at 30 Park Street in Concord, through July 7, 2012.



NEW HAMPSHIRE

Icons of History: Objects that Define New Hampshire is funded by the New Hampshire Antiques Dealers Association, with additional support from the Robert O. Wilson Historical Research Fund, the Una Mason Collins Fund, and the McIninch Foundation.

"We are grateful to the New Hampshire Antiques Dealers Association for its generous sponsorship of this exhibition, and for all it does to preserve and promote New Hampshire's history," said the Society's Executive Director Bill Dunlap. "We are delighted to partner with them in sharing these iconic treasures with the public."

For nearly two centuries the New Hampshire Historical Society has collected and preserved thousands of objects, books, documents, and photographs about the state's past, and the treasure trove of items in *Icons of History* reflects the breadth and depth of these collections. Ranging from fine art to signs,

military artifacts to political campaign items and tea sets to clothing, each object tells a story about New Hampshire's history, character, and culture.

Visitors will rediscover familiar icons of New Hampshire, like the legendary and popular symbol of New Hampshire, the Old Man of the Mountain, painted on the door of a Concord Coach, or majestic White Mountain paintings, and portraits of notables like Daniel Webster and Franklin Pierce, the only U.S. President from New Hampshire. At the same time, *Icons of History* offers new and unexpected treasures that reveal the richness of New Hampshire's heritage, including retail signs, needlework, pottery, and tools crafted by everyday citizens.

The exhibition includes a rare watercolor and ink drawing of a late-18th-century noncommissioned New Hampshire militia soldier, attributed to George Melvill of Candia and Farmington. Dated between 1794 and 1792 and acquired by the Society in 2009, the watercolor is the only drawing of an 18th-century noncommissioned militia soldier known to exist in public or private collections.

North Country local residents will appreciate Berlin Falls, N.H. and Berlin Mills, a colored lithograph depicting a bird's-eye view of an iconic New Hampshire locale in 1888, and advertising connoisseurs have a wide selection of signs to enjoy. Advertising items on display include a sign promoting a hatters shop owned by Benjamin Kimball, dating around 1800, and an original poster by Alice Cosgrove, New Hampshire's official state artist, who used her talent to mold the state's image in the years after World War II.

The Civil War is remembered, too: a Civil War lottery box from Lebanon, NH, was used to draw names of eligible men to be drafted into the United States Army in the Civil War. The exhibition also includes *The Glorious Little Flag*, which symbolizes the valor and courage soldiers displayed in the horrific setting of the Confederate Andersonville prison, where 13,000 Union prisoners of war died. A small band of soldiers from 5th New Hampshire Volunteers drew a flag on a scrap of cloth with red and blue ink and sang patriotic signs on the Fourth of July, 1864.

The 100 year-old library building at 30 Park Street, which opened on November 23, 1911, is arguably the most significant object in the Society's collection. Financed through a gift by Edward and Julia Tuck, and designed by Guy Lowell, it was constructed using the finest materials of its day and was meant to serve future generations of New Hampshire. The Society will be celebrating the stately building's centennial, which includes a documentary film, *Tuck's Gift*, on the building's origins, construction, and opening. The film is produced in partnership with New Hampshire Public Television (NHPTV), made possible in part by a grant from the New Hampshire Humanities Council and with major support from Merrimack County Savings Bank and other generous sponsors. *Tuck's Gift* will air in November on NHPTV. The Society will also offer a screening to the public on Saturday, November 26, 2011.

Icons Part II is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the library's gallery is free. The museum is open Monday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5

p.m. After October 15, the museum is closed on Mondays. Admission is \$5.50 for adults; \$4.50 for seniors; \$3 for children 6-18, with a family maximum of \$17. Children under 6 and members of the New Hampshire Historical Society are admitted free.

Founded in 1823, the New Hampshire Historical Society is the independent nonprofit that saves, preserves, and shares New Hampshire history. The Society serves thousands of children and adults each year through its museum, research library, educational programs, and award-winning publications. The Society is not a state-funded agency. All its programs and services are made possible by membership dues and contributions. For more information visit nhhistory.org or call 603-228-6688.

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Calendar listing

Icons of History: Objects that Define New Hampshire (Part I) is on view at the New Hampshire Historical Society's museum, located at 6 Eagle Square, Concord, through December 31, 2011. The museum is open Monday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. After October 15, the museum is closed on Mondays. Admission is \$5.50 for adults; \$4.50 for seniors; \$3 for children 6-18, with a family maximum of \$17. Children under 6 and members of the New Hampshire Historical Society are admitted free. For more information, visit nhhistory.org or call 603-228-6688.

Icons of History: Objects that Define New Hampshire (Part II) opened September 10, 2011, at the Society's headquarters at 30 Park St, Concord. It will be on view through July 7, 2012. The library is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, visit nhhistory.org or call 603-228-6688.

Image credit

New Hampshire

Alice Cosgrove (1909-1971)

Tempera on posterboard, c.1950

New Hampshire Historical Society's collection

Gift of Mary Louise Hancock